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There are two other islands not yet noticed, one called Gaidura nissi (Jackass island), off Cape La Scara, is low and rocky, and barren, presenting on its surface masses of limestone incrustated with gypsum. The other, Kiefalo nissi (Head island) is of the same nature as Korako nissi, about fifteen or eighteen feet high, of soft sandstone, and covered with verdure.

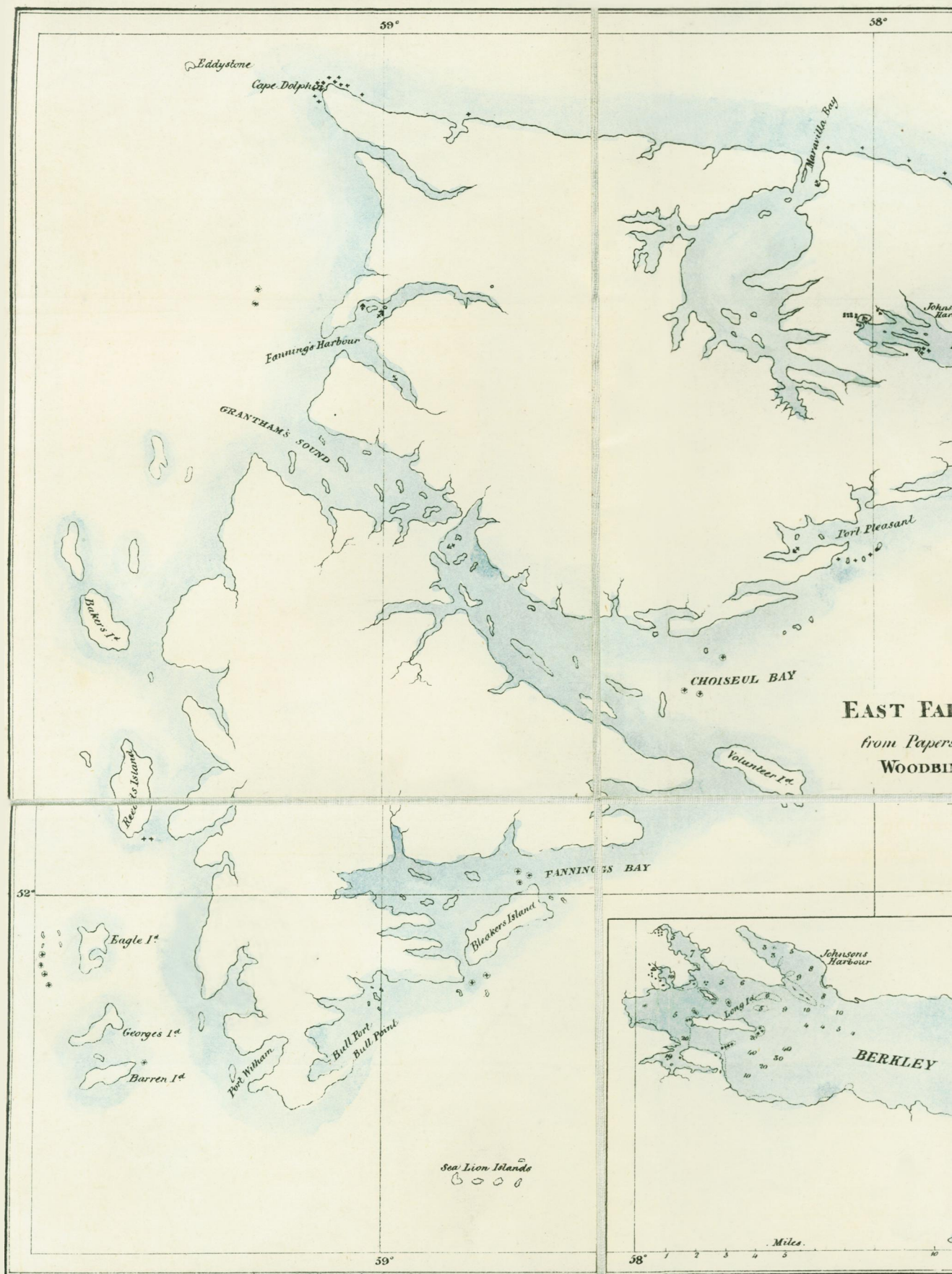
I have purposely avoided entering into the *morale* of the people, as there are already so many able descriptions of them already before the public; suffice it to say, that the majority of the inhabitants are Greeks, many Albanians, and but few Osmanlees, who are for the most part government officers. The mode of travelling and transporting goods is by horses; the rate averaging three miles an hour, by which medium they reckon distance, eight hours being generally considered as a day's journey. The country abounds in snakes, many of which are venomous. Game, especially hares and partridges, are plentiful. The olive among trees, and the myrtle among shrubs, are the most common. There is no regularity in the tides, the rise, fall, and velocity being entirely dependent on the force of the wind.

VI.—*Account of East Falkland Island.* Communicated by Woodbine Parish, Esq., F.R.S. Read 14th Jan. 1833.

[THE claims of Great Britain to the Falkland Islands having been lately renewed, the following account of the Eastern Isle may not be uninteresting. It was drawn up for me during my late residence in South America by Mr. Vernet, who formed a settlement and resided there for several years under an authority from the government of Buenos Ayres. Mr. Vernet's establishment was at Berkeley Sound, adjoining the ruins of that formerly planted at Port Louis by M. Bourgainville. It will be recollected that the British settlement, which was forcibly broken up by the Spaniards in 1770, and subsequently restored, was at Port Egmont, on the Western Island.—W. P.]

East Falkland Island is favourably situated both for colonization, and for the refreshment of vessels bound round Cape Horn.* Its proximity to the Cape, and its excellent harbours, most of which are of easy access, with good holding ground, and sufficient depth of water for even first-rate men-of-war, would alone make it a valuable possession. Whilst the facilities it affords for exercising ships' companies ashore, without the risk of losing them, together with the abundance of wild cattle and anti-scorbutic herbs found there, point it out as a most desirable resort for ships

* See also p. 105.





which have been long at sea, and whose crews are threatened with scurvy.

The climate on the island is, on the whole, temperate. The temperature never falls below 26° Fahrenheit in the coldest winter, nor rises above 75° in the hottest summer; its general range is from 30° to 50° in winter, 50° to 75° in summer. The weather is rather unsettled, particularly in winter; but the showers, whether of rain, snow, or hail, are generally of short duration, and their effects are never long visible on the surface of the ground. Thus floods are unknown; snow disappears in a few hours, unless on the tops of the mountains; and ice is seldom found above an inch thick. Thunder and lightning are of rare occurrence; fogs are frequent, especially in autumn and spring, but they usually dissipate towards noon. The winter is rather longer than the summer, but the difference is not above a month, and the long warm days of summer, with occasional showers, produce a rapid vegetation in that season.

The wind blows commonly from the north-west in summer, south-west in winter, and seldom long from the eastward in either season. The finest weather in winter is when the wind draws from the west or north-west; and, in summer, when it stands at north-west or north-east. A north wind almost always brings rain, especially in summer; and east and south-east winds are constantly accompanied by thick and wet weather. Snow squalls generally come from the S.S.E., S., or S.S.W. Storms are most frequent at the changes of the seasons, and blow commonly from S.S.W. to W.S.W.; but they seldom last above twenty-four hours.

The soil of East Falkland Island has been found well-adapted to cultivation, consisting generally of from six to eight inches of black vegetable mould, below which is either gravel or clay. Wheat and flax were both raised, of quality equal, if not superior, to the seed sown, which was procured from Buenos Ayres; and potatoes, cabbage, turnips, and other kinds of vegetables, produced largely, and of excellent quality. Fruit-trees were not tried, the plants sent from Buenos Ayres having perished before they arrived.

The soil also produces different kinds of vegetables wild, as celery, cresses, &c., and many other esculent plants, the proper names of which were not known to the settlers, but their palatable taste and valuable anti-scorbutic properties were abundantly ascertained by them. Among others is one which they called the tea-plant, growing close to the ground, and producing a berry of the size of a large pea, white with a tinge of rose-colour, and of exquisite flavour. A decoction of its leaves is a good substitute for tea, whence its name. It is very abundant.

No trees grow on the island; but wood for building was

obtained, tolerably easily, from the adjoining Straits of Magellan. For fuel, besides peat and turf, which are abundant in many places, and may be procured dry out of the penguins' holes, three kinds of bushes are found, called fachinal, matajo, and gruillera. The first of these grows straight, from two to five feet high, and the stem, in proportion to the height, is from half an inch to one inch and a half in diameter: small woods of this are found in all the valleys, and form good cover; it bears no fruit. The second is more abundant in the southern than in the northern part of the island; its trunk is nearly the thickness of a man's arm, very crooked, never higher than three feet, and bears no fruit. The gruillera is the smallest of the three, growing close to the ground, and abundant all over the island: being easily ignited, it was chiefly used as fuel when the people were away from the settlement, and to light the peat-fires in the houses. It bears a small dark-red berry of the size of a large pea, of an insipid taste.

The country, in the northern part of the island, is rather mountainous. The highest part was called San Simon, at no great distance from the bottom of Berkeley Sound. The tops of the mountains are thickly strewn with large boulders, or detached stones, of which quantities have fallen, in some places, in lines along their sides, looking like rivers of stones; these are alternated with extensive tracts of marshy ground, descending from the very tops of the mountains, where many large fresh-water ponds are found, from one to two feet deep. The best ground is at the foot of the mountains, and of this there is abundance fit for cultivation, in plains stretching from five to fifteen miles along the margin of the sea. In the southern peninsula there is hardly a rising ground that can be called a hill. Excellent fresh water is found everywhere, and may be procured either by digging, or from the rivulets, which flow from the interior towards the sea, through valleys covered with a rich vegetation.

Herds of wild horned-cattle exist on the island, sufficient to maintain a great many settlers; and wild hogs are abundant in the northern peninsula; wild horses are also found there, of small size, but very hardy, which, when broken in, as some were without difficulty, were found of great service to the settlement. Rabbits are in great numbers, of a large size and fine fur. Foxes too are found, but differing considerably from those of Europe, having a thick head, and coarse fur; they live chiefly on geese and other fowl, which they catch at night when asleep.

Game is extremely common, especially wild geese and ducks; of the former, two kinds were distinguished, the lowland or kelp-geese, and the upland geese; the latter were much superior in flavour, the former being of a fishy taste, living chiefly on mussels, shrimps, and kelp. Both were very tame,

and the upland geese were easily domesticated. They are finest eating in autumn, being then fattest, in consequence of the abundance at that season of tea-berries, of which they are very fond: the rest of the year they live on the short grass. They have a white neck and breast, with the rest of the body speckled of a fine brown marbled colour. The lowland gander is quite white, and the goose dark with a speckled breast.

Of ducks there are several kinds. The loggerheaded are the largest, and almost of the size of the geese; their flesh is tough and fishy; they cannot fly, and when cut off from the water are easily caught. The next size is also of inferior quality, tough and fishy; but the smaller kinds, which are not larger than young pigeons, are deliciously good, and are found in large flocks along the rivulets and fresh-water ponds. Snipes are found so tame that they were often killed by throwing ramrods at them. In addition to these, a great variety of sea-birds frequent the shores, of which the most valuable to sailors and settlers, from the quantity of eggs they deposit, are the gulls and penguins. These birds have their fixed rookeries, to which they resort, in numerous flocks, every spring; the gulls generally in green places near the shore, or on the small islands in the bays; the penguins chiefly along the steep rocky shores of the sea. The eggs of both are eatable, even with relish, after long confinement on board ship; the penguin's being, however, the best, and less strong than that of the gull. So numerous are these eggs, that on one occasion eight men gathered sixty thousand in four or five days, and could easily have doubled that number had they stopped a few days longer. Both gulls and penguins will lay six or eight each, if removed; otherwise, they only lay two and hatch them. The gulls come first to their hatching-places, the penguins a little later.

Fish abounds in all the bays and inlets, especially in spring, when they come to spawn at the mouths of the fresh-water rivulets. They generally enter and retire twice every day, at half-flood and half-ebb; and are in such numbers, that ten or twelve men could always catch and salt about sixty tons in less than a month. They were usually caught by a sweeping-net, but they also took the hook, being of a kind between the mullet and salmon. Their flavour was excellent; and when salted, they were considered superior to the cod; many ship-loads might be procured annually.

Of shell-fish there are only mussels and clams; they are very abundant, and easily gathered on the beach at low water.

Seals are found on the island, or rather on the rocks close to it; and hair-seals (lions and elephants) abound along its shores. Many black whales have been also caught in its neighbourhood;

in consequence of which the island has of late years been much resorted to by fishing-vessels, English, American, and French. Of these, eighty-nine touched at it between 1826 and 1831.

East Falkland Island is singularly cut into by the sea, forming various good harbours of easy access for vessels of almost any burthen. In steering into most of them, little other direction is necessary than to keep out of the kelp, which grows profusely on all the rocks; but as Berkeley Sound is both the most frequented, and in some respects the best, the following more specific instructions may be given regarding it.

“Vessels approaching Berkeley Sound from the northward should endeavour to make the land ten or fifteen miles west of the port, the prevailing winds being westerly; and when approaching from the southward should, in like manner, make allowance for the currents, which frequently run very strong to the northward. When entering the Sound, a sufficient berth must be given to a ledge of rocks, called the Volunteer Rocks, which run out from the north point about a mile and a quarter; outside of which, in nearly the same line, at a further distance of about another mile, is a single sunken rock, with only six feet water on it at low tide. When these rocks are cleared, and the Sound is fairly entered, there is no danger, except from a small ledge of rocks off Eagle Point, about two cables’ length from the shore, with kelp growing all over it, and therefore easily seen. Above this point the Sound is quite clear till well up, when a ledge of five or six black rocks will be seen on the north side, behind which is an excellent harbour, called Johnson’s Harbour, with good holding ground in six or seven fathoms, and greater convenience for watering than in any other part of the bay.

“If a ship, endeavouring to enter Berkeley Sound, find the wind blowing hard down, which is often the case, and is thus prevented getting to a suitable anchorage in the bay, a good port exists immediately south of the sound, and about two and a half miles from the small islands in its mouth, called Port William, or Harriet’s Bay. This is of easy access, and fresh water may be easily obtained in it. In going in, ships should keep on the north shore, about two cables’ length distant, as the tide runs strong. The flood runs to the southward, and the ebb to the north-east.”

To the south of Berkeley Sound, the coast of East Falkland Island should not be approached too near, particularly in thick weather; there being no correct chart of it, and many low and dangerous islands lying off, some of them even out of sight of the land, particularly to the southward.

Of the annexed plans of East Falkland Island and Berkeley Sound, the first is but a sketch, and is not to be relied on as any

guide for pilotage. The second is more exact, being after a plan of the Sound made by the first lieutenant of the *Uranie*, French frigate, wrecked there in 1820; and since corrected by many personal observations made by the masters of different sealing ships.

VII.—*Account of the Ascent of the Peter Botte Mountain, Mauritius, on the 7th September, 1832.* Extracted from a private letter from Lieutenant Taylor, R.A.; and communicated by Mr. Barrow. Read 28th January, 1832.

YOU are no doubt aware, from my former letter, that the Peter Botte has always been considered inaccessible; and although a tradition exists of a man of that name having ascended it, and losing his life in returning, it is seldom believed, no authentic account remaining of the fact. A Frenchman, forty-two years ago, declared that he had got on the top by himself, and made a hole in the rock for a flag-staff; and his countrymen naturally believed him! but the value of this assertion may be also judged of by the present narrative. The ascent has been frequently attempted, and by several people, of late years; once by the officers of his Majesty's ship *Samarang*, who lost their way and found themselves separated from the Peter Botte itself by a deep cleft in the rock, and in consequence were compelled to return. Captain Lloyd, chief civil engineer, and your old friend Dawkins, made the attempt last year, and succeeded in reaching a point between the shoulder and the neck, where they planted a ladder, which did not however reach halfway up a perpendicular face of rock that arrested their progress. This was the last attempt. Captain Lloyd was then, however, so convinced of the practicability of the undertaking, that he determined to repeat the experiment this year, and accordingly made all his preparations by the beginning of this month. On the 6th he started from town, accompanied by Lieutenant Phillpotts, of the 29th Reg., Lieutenant Keppel, R.N. (my old messmate), and myself, whom he asked to join him. He had previously sent out two of his overseers with about twenty-five negroes and sepoy convicts to make all the necessary preparations. They carried with them a sort of tent, and ropes, crow-bars, a portable ladder, provisions, and everything we could possibly want for three or four days, as we intended to remain on the shoulder of the mountain, close to the base of Peter Botte, until we either succeeded, or were convinced of its impossibility. These men had worked hard; and, on our arriving at the foot of the mountain, we found the tent and all our tools, &c. safely